

Resident Questions for Housing Area Panel

Reference: N3.2

Question Title	Repair Services
Date question raised	19/12/2022
Week of Area Panel	13/2/2023
Area in city	North
Star rating applied by residents	3 stars – city wide
Deadline for officer response	9am on 19 th January
Name of officer responding	Sam Crick
Officer job title	Operations Manager, Housing Repairs and Maintenance

Resident Question

Issue:	The repairs service needs improvement in various areas.
Background:	<p>While residents were pleased to hear that repairs turnaround time is decreasing, they raised the following concerns regarding both routine and emergency repairs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency repairs line: having to wait a long time for calls to be answered. <p><i>Example: an elderly woman in Moulsecoomb called the emergency number and had to wait 45 minutes on the phone, in a state of distress. She eventually had to ask a neighbour to help report this online, as she was not able to do this herself.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple visits over a period of time to address a single repair issue. This is not an efficient use of existing staff time, particularly given the Council have reported a shortage of staff. • Lack of communication and response by the Repairs team: when a repair is reported, there is no acknowledgement or response from the team for a long time – residents don't know if their repair is being dealt with or not, or when they can expect the repair to be dealt with. • Residents are having to push and hassle Council staff to get repairs done. Residents do not want to have to constantly push and chase Council staff for a basic repairs service. • The Repairs team are giving instructions to and encouraging residents to deal with boiler issues themselves, rather than sending a Gas Safe plumber.

Action requested:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it standard procedure for Repairs staff to be encouraging residents to sort out boiler issues themselves? • Why is the Repairs service not coordinated and organised in such a way as to minimise the number of visits in order to get the repair done? Is anything being done to streamline the process, and make it more efficient? • Why do residents not receive some kind of acknowledgement or confirmation when they report a repair? Are the Council doing anything to improve communications and responsiveness of the Repairs team with their customers? • Residents should not have to put constant pressure on the Council just to get basic repairs done. Why is this having to happen? What will the Council do to rectify the situation?
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Officer Response

Officer contact details:	Sam Crick, Operations Manager, Housing Repairs and Maintenance
Officer Response:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current average wait time on phones for Jan 2023 is 8mins 8secs. The helpdesk has experienced some staff shortages and very busy periods due to weather. • Is it standard procedure for Repairs staff to be encouraging residents to sort out boiler issues themselves? Gas boiler issues reported to our Helpdesk will be triaged and some advice and questions may be offered to the resident to either help diagnose or resolve the issue such as checking thermostat settings/batteries or the controls on the boiler. The aim of this is to help resolve the issue swiftly for the resident and save a wasted visit for a gas engineer who could be on another job. • Why is the Repairs service not coordinated and organised in such a way as to minimise the number of visits in order to get the repair done? Is anything being done to streamline the process, and make it more efficient? The repairs service makes every effort to coordinate works in such a way as to minimise visits and make the service as efficient as possible. On occasions there may be operational factors that affect this. We are constantly looking at ways to improve the metric of first time fixes, for example reviewing van stock lists. • Why do residents not receive some kind of acknowledgement or confirmation when they report a repair? Are the Council doing anything to improve communications and responsiveness of the Repairs team with their customers? Residents reporting repairs over the phone will receive verbal acknowledgment and be told the order number for any orders raised. We are also rolling out our Housing Online system which

	<p>will allow residents to check on the status of their outstanding repairs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents should not have to put constant pressure on the Council just to get basic repairs done. Why is this having to happen? What will the Council do to rectify the situation? <p>The repairs and maintenance service are doing all they can to ensure that repairs are carried out within appropriate timeframes. With the current workload that the service is dealing with it is essential that works are prioritised correctly ensuring that the most urgent repairs for our residents who are most vulnerable are carried out first.</p>
Action:	N/A
Start date:	Jan 23
End date:	Jan 23

